

LA 216

.B5

THE
 NEW SOUTH

BY

ROBERT BINGHAM.

WITH COMPLIMENTS OF

ROBERT BINGHAM,

BINGHAM SCHOOL P. O., N. C.

THE NEW SOUTH:

AN ADDRESS BY

MAJ. ROBERT BINGHAM,

OF BINGHAM SCHOOL, N. C.,

(Bingham School P. O.)

IN THE INTEREST OF

NATIONAL AID TO EDUCATION.

DELIVERED

FEBRUARY 15TH, 1884, IN WASHINGTON, D. C., BEFORE THE
SUPERINTENDENT'S DEPARTMENT OF THE NATIONAL
EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION,

AND REPEATED

IN MADISON, WISCONSIN, BEFORE THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL
ASSOCIATION, ON THE 16TH OF JULY, 1884.

51-100-100-100-100

LA 216
.B5

THE NEW SOUTH.

[From the Proceedings of the Superintendents' Department of the National Educational Association, Washington, D. C., February 15th, 1884.]

“President Butcher then introduced Major ROBERT BINGHAM, of Bingham School, North Carolina, who addressed the meeting as follows, on

THE EDUCATIONAL STATUS AND NEEDS OF THE NEW SOUTH.

MR. PRESIDENT—LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I appear before this highly cultured audience, composed almost entirely of Northern men and women, to tell of the educational status and needs of the South, and I wish you to understand distinctly that I am a Southern man, of Southern birth, of Southern blood, of Southern education, of Southern record, of Southern prejudices, if you will. I was a Confederate soldier. I saw the last sun rise on the army of Northern Virginia. I was one of Lee's 7,500 armed men at Appomattox Court-House, who never bowed the knee to any Baal, but fought to the bitter end. And it was a bitter end; but these bitter pangs were the birth pangs of the NEW SOUTH, which, though still in its swaddling bands, is greater and more powerful in some respects than the old South, and which will soon be greater and more powerful in all respects than the old South could ever have been.

When the bitter end came we surrendered in good faith. We accepted the conditions, and having done OUR DUTY as we saw it in one direction, we laid down our arms and betook ourselves to repairing the wreck and ruin around us. It was folly to stand, like the figure at the stern of a vessel, looking backward and weeping over the troubled waters behind. The Almighty has given man eyes in front only, that he may look to and live in the present and future.

The past of the South is irrevocable, and we do not wish to recall it. The past of the South is irreparable, and we do not wish to repair it; for, terrible as the lesson was in the learning, there are two propositions which meet with universal acceptance in the new South: First, that the greatest blessing that ever befell us was a failure to establish a nationality; and, second, that the next greatest blessing was getting rid of slavery on any conditions. A few of the older men—stranded wrecks of by-gone days—may cling to the dead past; but their influence has ceased, and, like giants Pope and Pagan in *Pilgrim's Progress*, they are harmless.

With regard to slavery, the men who are the motors of the new South reason very simply and conclusively that before the war, with organized labor and organized capital, the South made a little more than 3,000,000 bales of cotton. In 1880, only fifteen years after the surrender, with disorganized labor, and with no capital but the growing crop, we made more than 6,000,000 bales of cotton.

North Carolina made 140,000 bales of cotton before the war, and 25,000,000 pounds of tobacco, and in 1880 she made 400,000 bales of cotton and 50,000,000 pounds of tobacco, and as much grain as before; that is, we have as much to eat as we ever had, and we handle twice as much money, and at this rate it will not take many years to make up for all our losses by the war; so that the wayfaring man must be an enormous fool if he cannot see that as 6,000,000 bales of cotton are better than 3,000,000 bales, so the present conditions will soon be better financially than the conditions before the war.

Again, we see the impossibility of a Southern nationality as plainly as we see the difference between the 6,000,000 and the 3,000,000 bales of cotton.

Every student of history must recognize the fact that the most marked characteristic of the Teutonic man, the man of the ages, is his intense instinct of local self-government. It was this instinctive fear of centralization that divided the England of the Angles and Saxons into a heptarchy before the infusion of centralizing Norman blood, and the same instinct has divided the Teuton beyond the German Ocean into so many petty independencies that the unification of Germany is an unsolved problem still. This same instinct of local autonomy prevailed after the Revolutionary war to such an extent that a federal union on any basis was of very difficult accomplishment, and the states' rights theory prevailed so fully as a theory that it was taught even at West Point fifty or sixty years ago, insomuch that if any of the West Point graduates who became Confederate leaders had been tried for treason, one very strong point in their defense would have been the text book on constitutional law used at the Academy while they were there, in which the states' rights theory was distinctly taught. And the United States could not have con-

sidered it treason in *men* to practise what the United States taught them officially as *boys* to believe.*

Now, in contrast to this denationalizing teaching at West Point fifty years ago, I wish to give you, very briefly, the kind of instruction which I, a Southern Democrat, give my pupils—instruction which last summer I was called upon to repeat at three or four State normal institutes in North Carolina, before nearly 1,000 teachers of common schools. It illustrates the manner as well as the animus of the instruction given in Southern private and public schools.

"Geography," I said, "by derivation, means earth-writing, as telegraphy means far-writing, and photography means light-writing. There are two kinds of earth-writing: *Man's*, which is political geography, and is feeble and ephemeral, and *God's*, which is physical geography, and is strong and eternal, predetermining climate, population, and the history of nations.

"One of the most distinctive features of physical geography is, that there are almost always some strong, bold strokes of God's earth-writing between nationalities. Nations have very rarely crystalized except behind natural barriers. Take China, for instance, a triangle with the highest mountains in the world to the southward, with mountains equally high, climatically, to the northward, and with the greatest of oceans to the east. In this triangle, separated from the rest of mankind by impassable barriers on all sides, constituting the boldest strokes upon the earth of God's earth-writing, the most remarkable civilization among man has been developed; for while Western empires in succession have risen, culminated, and passed away, the Chinese civilization, defective as it is in many respects, surpasses all others in having attained continuity. Man may come, and man may go, but the Chinaman goes on forever; for God's earth-writing isolates him completely.

"In Europe we find nationalities separated by natural barriers. The Pyrenees separate France and Spain; the Alps separate Austria and Italy; the Rhine flows between Germany and France; the thread of silver sea between England and the mainland has been a wall of fire which no alien enemy has dared to cross since the days of William the Norman.

*The following letter is my authority for this statement:

4117 PINE STREET, PHILADELPHIA, March 25, 1884.

DEAR MAJOR BINGHAM: While the question of Jeff. Davis's trial for high treason was pending, Mr. Reed, counsel for the defence, was a member of my brother's congregation at Orange Valley, N. J. He told my brother, after it had been decided that the trial was not to take place, that if the case had come to trial the defence would have offered in evidence the text book on constitutional law from which Davis had been instructed at West Point by the authority of the United States Government, and in which the right of secession is maintained as one of the constitutional rights of a State. You are quite at liberty to refer to me for this statement, which is given according to the best of my recollection.

Very truly yours,

L. W. BACON.

"Civilization, like solids in solution, does not crystalize while motion continues. A natural barrier stops migration, and national peculiarities develop during the temporary rest. But when the peoples on opposite sides of an intervening barrier evolve organization enough to overcome the barrier, they meet with developed peculiarities which make them different, and which make them enemies.

"In the United States we find physical features bold enough for barriers between nations in the Appalachians, in the Mississippi, in the Rockies; but these lines of God's earth-writing run north and south, at right angles to the lines of population, and did not stop migration. A father reached the Appalachians; a son and a daughter settled on this side of the mountain; a son and daughter crossed the mountain, and the mountain separated a homogeneous population. The same was the case with the Mississippi—the same was the case with the Rockies.

"What we of the South tried to do, was to establish a nationality along a line 3,000 miles long from east to west, where there was not a stroke of God's earth-writing to separate one nationality from another, and the Almighty, who had written this country one with His earth-writing pen, spurned our efforts, though man fought for a nationality never more boldly before."

Such is the instruction given to my pupils, who come from every State in the South, and, by request, to nearly a thousand teachers of public schools last summer. Now contrast the theoretical disunion taught at West Point fifty years ago from man's standpoint, and the practical union from God's standpoint, impressed upon the pupils of a private school, and upon nearly a thousand teachers of public schools last year by a Southern Democrat, in a Southern State, and ask yourselves if the years have wrought no changes.

But when the war ended, we of the South were the poorest people in the civilized world. We staked everything unreservedly upon the decision of the sword, and lost. The intensity of the struggle is not realized by the people of the Northern States. A comparison between the men under arms during the Revolutionary war and during the late civil war illustrates this point. In 1776 the Colonies numbered 3,000,000, and never had more than 30,000 men under arms at one time; that is $\frac{300000}{3000000}$, $\frac{3}{300}$, $\frac{1}{100}$ of the population were under arms at once.

In 1861 North Carolina had 600,000 white inhabitants; 60,000 of them were under arms at one time—that is, $\frac{60000}{600000}$, $\frac{6}{60}$, $\frac{1}{10}$ of the population were under arms at one time—so that, in proportion to population, North Carolina was engaged ten times more intensely in the late war than our ancestors were in the war with England; and to illustrate what ten times any thing means, I call your attention to the fact that a race-horse only moves six times faster than a man in a rapid walk, and a railway train, at the overwhelming speed of forty miles an hour, moves only ten

times faster than a man walking rapidly down the track; so that the speed of a railway train at forty miles an hour and of a man walking rapidly bear the same proportions to each other as North Carolina's share in the war between the States and the share of the Colonies in the war with England. And when the conflict ended in which we staked our all, we had nothing left but our manhood and the ground we stood upon, and were deeply in debt.

The comparative wealth of the two sections of the United States is illustrated by the fact that in 1880 the taxable wealth of New York City was equal to that of Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia and Texas.

The taxable wealth of Boston was equal to that of Virginia and Kentucky.

The taxable wealth of Rhode Island, with only one forty-seventh of the area, was equal to that of Georgia.

The taxable wealth of New York State, including New York City, was equal to that of the whole thirteen Southern States, with an extra State equal to Georgia thrown in for good measure.

In short, the Federal dollar started at a dollar in gold, went down to 33 cents, and then back to a dollar, and those who claimed it as their dollar became very rich; but the Confederate dollar, which started at a dollar in gold, went down to absolute zero, and staid there, and we were left with nothing but our manhood. And if those to whom the war was such a source of wealth should ever attempt to inaugurate another war involving the integrity of the Federal dollar—the dollar which we are now beginning to handle—we of the South, to whom the war was a source of much terrible poverty, will guard the integrity of the Federal dollar, if need be, with bullet and bayonet.

But with all our losses by the war, our manhood remained. In fifteen years after the war ended, with no basis of credit but the growing crop of each year (which has been mortgaged ahead ever since the surrender in order to raise means for its own cultivation), we had doubled the number of bales of cotton; we have taken a dollar's worth of cotton and manufactured it into coarser fabrics worth \$2, and thereby have forced the New England spinner to make finer fabrics, thus increasing the value of one dollar's worth of cotton to \$4.

It is safe to say that no conquered people ever showed such powers of recuperation. The example of France, after the Franco-Prussian war, is often referred to; but France lost very few men on the battle-field; they were all captured; France spent but little money on military equipment; she had very little military equipment; and so the money was all in the country, intact, to pay the German indemnity after the war was ended, and was actually produced for this purpose.

Another thing which I wish to mention, is the fact that we have no prejudice against Northern men or Northern ideas *per se*. There were recently five of my own former pupils learning the

business of cotton-spinning at the same time in the mills of Lowell and Fall River, at ordinary mill-operatives' wages, and the fathers of these young men are our most prominent people, and were all slave-owners before the war. Again, the teachers in our public schools have gone to New England in large numbers (I can mention at least twenty-five myself) to inspect the public schools. Northern experts have superintended our teachers' institutes from year to year. After some weeks spent looking at the working of the public schools in Massachusetts, I was called upon at our University Normal School to tell about what I had seen. I said, "That, with nothing in the heavens above, the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth to build a prosperity upon, the people of Massachusetts are, per capita, the richest people in the world. The country produces nothing but granite and ice; and yet I was told that the average per capita wealth of Boston is over \$1,700, and of the whole State over \$1,000; they have the best intercommunication in the world, the greatest distance of a man's house from a railroad station in Massachusetts being 10 miles, and the average distance not being more than 3 miles, and *they pay the highest per capita school tax in the world*; and that it becomes us to find where the secret of this Samsonian strength lies."

And when some one said that I was turning "Yankee," I went on to say "that I had seen some other things. I saw a free-school house built with tax money which cost \$750,000; I saw the names of 100 free-school teachers, head masters of the Boston schools, who got nearly four-thousand-dollar salaries; I saw women (there are about 100 of them in Boston, free-school teachers) who get two-thousand-eight-hundred-dollar salaries. "Now, there are," I said, "three hundred and fifty teachers present, and you know that you do not get more than an average of \$25 per month, and you don't get that for more than four months in the year; and you know further, that if you could superinduce a set of conditions under which the best men among you would have a chance at a four thousand-dollar salary as a free-school teacher, \$1,000 more than our Governor gets, and the best woman among you a chance at a two-thousand-eight-hundred-dollar salary as a free-school teacher, \$300 more than our Chief Justice gets, if you could do this, you know very well that you would all turn Yankees unless you are idiots."

To illustrate further the feelings of our people, I wish to say that, at first, there was a good deal of prejudice in our minds against those who came from the North to teach the freedmen. Some of this prejudice was reasonable, some of it was not. Unreasonable prejudices have passed away. Six years ago the Virginia Educational Association, composed almost entirely of ex-Confederates, met in the buildings of the Hampton Normal Institute. Many of the members were entertained by the Superintendent and his colleagues, and it was then that I first enjoyed

the privilege of becoming acquainted with General Armstrong and his wonderful work.

About ten years ago a missionary of the Northern Presbyterian Church was driven by the climate from his work for the heathen in tropical Asia, and asked to be put into some mission field where the climate was not prohibitory. He was sent to North Carolina, and put in charge of a school for colored men.

He came to do good, not harm; to quiet the troubled waters, not to stir up the mire and filth; he came as a teacher, not as a carpet-bag politician; he came to work for God and for good, not for the Republican party, though he has voted the Republican ticket at every Presidential election since he came to the South.

Now, this Northern educator of colored men, this head of a negro school, is cordially received in any pulpit in the State, and is a favorite preacher with the young men attending the leading denominational college of the Southern Presbyterian Church; and *young men and boys are more sensitive than older men*. Further still, one of his daughters taught till her marriage, in the largest female school in North Carolina, and with very unusual success. Another daughter taught in the most successful female school in Virginia, where she was pressed to remain; but she resigned her position in Virginia to accept a position in a very prominent female school *in the same town in which her father teaches colored men*; and our people are much more sensitive about their girls than about their boys. I mention these things because I know them to be facts. I have seen them with my own eyes, and I have permission from the parties concerned to give the names, dates, and localities in full if it is desired.* An ounce of fact like this is worth ten tons of theory based upon statements made in some sensational book or by some sensational newspaper scribbler, or upon the opinion of some one who rode through the South on a railroad train and thought the information thus gained was sufficient to base an authoritative opinion upon.

Again, the public schools for both races in Wilmington are in the hands of the same white Superintendent, and this Superintendent, the first man of Southern birth who ever had charge of the schools for both races in North Carolina, was a pupil of my own, and was teaching for me when he was called to take charge of the public-school work in Wilmington, our largest city, at the highest salary ever paid up to that time to a public-school teacher in North Carolina. The example set by Wilmington has already been followed by Charlotte and Winston.

While these things have nothing to do with the social relations of the races, which will regulate themselves, as social relations regulate themselves everywhere—"for the hand of Douglas is his own"—yet such facts as these must tend, I think, to correct mis-

*For further particulars address Rev. Dr. Mattoon, Charlotte, N. C.; Capt. J. B. Burwell, Raleigh, N. C., and Rev. W. R. Atkinson, Charlotte, N. C.

apprehensions which I found existing in the minds of Northern people among whom I have spent several months within the last three years.

I wish to correct another misapprehension, which I found common among New England people, as to what we are doing ourselves for education. I take North Carolina and Massachusetts as the units of measure. In 1880 the taxable property of Massachusetts was \$1,600,000,000, and the school tax was \$4,000,000; 4,000,000 out of 1,600,000,000 is $\frac{1}{400}$; that is, Massachusetts pays for school purposes \$1 a year out of every \$400 of taxable property. In 1880 the taxable property of North Carolina was \$160,000,000; the school tax was \$400,000; that is, \$4 out of every \$1,600, $\frac{1}{400}$; \$1 out of every \$400 of taxable property, which is exactly what Massachusetts gives; and it is much harder to give a little out of a little than to give much out of much. Our Lord emphasized this when he said that the widow's mite was more than the rich, of their abundance, had given; and in the South since the war the school tax is but too often literally the widow's mite. And, what is more, ninety-nine hundredths of what is raised in North Carolina is paid by the white people, and three-sevenths of it goes to the children of the blacks. And besides the State tax, many of our towns tax themselves and keep up schools eight or nine months in the year; so that, as a matter of simple fact, four-sevenths of our population raise as much by taxation as seven-sevenths of the population in Massachusetts do on every one hundred dollars' worth of property, and tax themselves heavily besides to continue the schools after the public money is exhausted.

I came here to ask for national aid, and I mention these things to show that we are not paupers, but that we are doing much more for ourselves than the people of Massachusetts are doing for themselves, in proportion to our means, and are "carrying" the blacks besides, who contribute almost nothing to the school fund, and get three-sevenths of its proceeds.

And we have other terrible difficulties to contend with. We have 1,400,000 people in North Carolina (taking North Carolina and Massachusetts again as the units of measure), which is 300,000 less than the population of Massachusetts; but the area of North Carolina is seven times as great as the area of Massachusetts, and the difficulty of reaching so sparse a population is very great. And not only so, but in Massachusetts 900,000—more than half of the people—live in cities and towns of as much as 2,000 inhabitants, while only 60,000—one twenty-third of the people in North Carolina—live in towns; and the rest—twenty-two twenty-thirds—live scattered over an area seven times as large as Massachusetts, larger than New York, and nearly as large as all New England, and many of them are 100 miles from a railway and 20 miles from a post-office, with its mail only once a week. That is, with only one-tenth ($\frac{1}{10}$) of the money which

Massachusetts has, North Carolina must reach seven (7) times the area, which makes our difficulties seventy (70) times as great as those of Massachusetts, even if area and money were the only factors.

Another great difficulty is the illiteracy of our people. I have been frequently called upon to talk to the people of my native State upon the subject of education, and when I get a set of North Carolina people together, I talk very plainly, and tell them exactly what the situation is, as I see it. I say that there is one black fact which we must meet. The illiteracy of white people in North Carolina is somewhat greater (according to the census of 1880) than anywhere else where God's sun shines upon the English speaking man. But if a Virginian, a South Carolinian, a Tennessean, or a Yankee were to come to North Carolina and violate the law of courtesy (which is as much a law of God as the law against murder or against stealing), by prating about our illiteracy, or about any other defect, however freely we may talk of it among ourselves, we might consult our feelings rather than our judgment and resent it in some pointed way; and unless your "old Adam" is under remarkable control, any one of you would probably do the same thing if a stranger were to make himself disagreeable by prating about any deformity among your people.

But illiteracy is a fact and it must be met as a fact.

Before the French Revolution there were 28,000,000 people in France, of whom 27,000,000 were illiterates; and look at the result.

In North Carolina, and, indeed, in the whole South, nearly half of our people, white and black, are illiterate; and while we do not expect any such calamity as befell France, we are too near the ragged edge when so large a proportion of those who at the polls decide the destiny of the country cannot read the votes they cast, and so are tools for demagogues, and we cannot afford to risk our prosperity and our lives upon such conditions. It is to wake up our people to their danger—to show them the rod they are cutting for their own smiting—that some of us talk to them as we do. But we cannot permit any outsider to talk in that way.

And our people have been aroused. Our public schools are doing the best that can be done under such circumstances. We tax our dollar as heavily as Massachusetts taxes hers, as I have already shown, and yet we keep our public schools open only three months in the year, and pay the teachers, on an average, \$25 per month for their work, and they board themselves. By our constitution, which is a legacy of the period of reconstruction, we cannot tax our people more than so many cents upon the hundred dollars, and that limit has been reached. In the towns a local option tax is levied (understand that the words "local option" suggest public schools with *us*, and not whisky, as with *you*), and very excellent public schools are kept open for nine months; but in the RURAL DISTRICTS, where all of our people live but

about 60,000, the limit of taxation has been reached, and the schools cannot be kept open more than three months in the year.

But our poverty—the fact that we have no accumulated capital, and that each prospective crop is made by a mortgage on itself, (so that ever since the war we have been trying the difficult feat of pulling ourselves up by our own boot-straps, so to speak;) all these things are smaller difficulties than the duality of our civilization—the presence of two races upon the same soil, and this duality we must look squarely in the face.

Ladies and gentlemen, a very large proportion of you are from the North. I came here to conciliate, not to offend you; but I tell you that the great mass of your people, however much you may think you know about it, are profoundly ignorant of the conditions in the South and of the relations between the races.

In the North one-sixtieth of the population are of African blood. In the whole South one-third are of African blood. In the Gulf States more than one-half; in some States more than three-fifths, and in localities in all the former slave States nine-tenths of the population are of African blood. We know more of these people than you do; whatever may be the feeling toward them collectively, we have a kindlier feeling for them personally and individually than you have; we know how to work with them and for them better than you do. As a simple matter of fact, I have hardly ever known a Northern man, since the war, to get along with them as laborers, and I have not known a Northern woman, since the war, to get along with them as house-servants at all.

These people have deserved well of us. I say this everywhere and always. They have behaved with more quietness, and with less violence, than any people ever behaved before upon the face of the earth under circumstances in anywise similar. I was reared in a slave woman's lap; I was interested in slave property; several hundred freedmen have been employed in my business since the surrender, and I have never had an unkind word, nor have I ever lacked for a kindly service from one of them. The men who lead public sentiment in the South realize that the negro is the youngest child of civilization, and that it is our interest, as well as our duty, to aid in his development; and the history of the world does not show any other example of such development from savagery to civilization as among the Southern negroes.

Compare the negro as he is in the South to-day—the quiet, peaceable, industrious citizen, the labor of whose hands produces six million bales of cotton annually—compare him, I say, with what he was one hundred years ago; compare him with what his cannibal savage kindred are now in Africa; compare the Southern negro who has received nothing but the ballot from the United States Government, and who produces six million bales of cotton annually—compare him, I say, with the American Indian, whom the United States Government has had in its special charge for

one hundred years, and on whom millions have been spent, and who produces absolutely nothing. Make these comparisons and ask yourselves if any savage race has ever shown such development in so short a time.

The Sandwich Islander alone can compare with the American negro in development; but while this development has been a blessing to him intellectually and morally, it has deprived him in a great measure of his powers of procreation; children are born to him no longer, and the race "is wearing awa' like snow wreathes in thaw" before the sun of civilization under which the Southern negro has increased in numbers as rapidly as he has intellectually and morally.

But the two races in the South must BE DEALT WITH SEPARATELY. The continued duality is an absolute necessity. The load of the country in the South must continue to be pulled by a double horse team, so to speak, with the white horse "in the lead" and the black horse on the "off side," to use our farmers' phrase, which I hope you will pardon me for using in a "stump" speech like this, and, to change the figure, a European man with a thousand years of culture, and especially an Anglo-Saxon man, God's king of men, will be and must be ahead of an African man, with only a hundred years of culture, and eighty of that spent in slavery, and any forced change of the relations will be fatal to the weaker race in the South, as force has been fatal to weaker races always and everywhere, and nobody knows and acknowledges the fact more fully than the blacks themselves. The white and the black horse work very kindly together without, to use our farmers' phrase again, even a "bearing stick" between them; for they know that they are pulling the same load, upon the same "double-tree," and they know that it takes them both to pull it. But you cannot grind the two horses up and make one huge-Bologna-sausage-white-and-black horse of them.

Employers and employed, even of the same race, however harmonious their relations may be economically, occupy different social planes everywhere in the world, and when the race question comes in, as it does with the Anglo-Saxon man and the Irishman and especially with the Anglo-Saxon woman and the Irish woman in Massachusetts, with the Anglo-Saxon and the yellow man on the Pacific coast, or with the Anglo-Saxon and the black man and woman in the South, *it must settle itself* as it settles itself the world over. There can be no middle ground about it, until the flood of years deposits a middle ground from its current, as the Nile or the Mississippi deposits its delta from its own waters.

In my intercourse with Northern people I have found a good deal of misapprehension on this very matter. They think that the white people have driven the negro out of the synagogue. But this is a great mistake. Though he is the youngest child of civilization, he is in one thing just as "smart" as Julius Cæsar. When Cæsar was crossing the Alps, one of his staff said that the little Alpine village through which they were passing, with all its

disadvantages, had this great advantage, that no one of its inhabitants had any ambition. "Yes," replied the great Cæsar, "but I would rather be first in this Alpine village than second at Rome." The colored man feels his race-inferiority. He knows that if he remains in the white church he must "take a back seat," an expression for which a "stump" speech must be an excuse again. If his child goes to the white school, he knows that his child will feel uncomfortable, no matter what the teacher or the other pupils think and feel about it, just as a half grown, gawky boy feels uncomfortable in a company of grown up gentlemen and ladies, however kindly their feeling may be to him; and so the colored man has simply moved his church to "Alpina," where he can be first without let or hindrance; and hard by his church is his school, where his child can be first without let or hindrance. It is as much against his nature for the Southern negro to worship in the white church, and for his child to learn in the white school, as it is for the wandering Arab to live in a house or the Anglo-Saxon in a tent. This feeling was as distinct in Boston fifty years ago as it is now in the South; and it would be distinct in Boston to-day if there were negroes enough in Boston to have separate churches and schools.

The race question is the greatest problem before the people of the United States. But we cannot solve it now. God and our children or God and our children's children will find the solution. *We* must do our present duty and leave the future to those to whom it will be the present. That changes will occur in fifty or a hundred years is not impossible; but a physician does not ask what his patient's symptoms may be in fifty years; he asks what they are now, and treats the case accordingly.

I think that I know the Southern white man better than it is possible for any one who has not lived in the South all his life to know him. I think that I know the Southern negro better than it is possible for any one who has not lived in the South all his life to know him. I am sure that I know the Southern white man and the Southern negro better than any person whatsoever, who has never been in the South at all, however well such a one may imagine that he understands the whole subject; and I tell you that social relations must be left to take care of themselves in the South, as they are left to take care of themselves everywhere else in the world. Neither race will brook any interference in this matter.

And yet, with all our race instincts, stimulated as they have been by circumstances, there is to-day less race prejudice in the South than in the North. Let me give you a practical example—not one that I read about; not one that I heard somebody else tell about; I have not dealt in a single such so-called "fact" since I began to talk to you. I have told you of things which I have seen with my own eyes. I will not refer to the way in which the Northern people have driven the Chinese, not only out of the synagogue, but out of the country; for that might seem political, and might be disagreeable; but I think I am safe in saying that

there is scarcely a community in the North where a colored mechanic enjoys the rights of equal manhood as he does everywhere in the South to-day. If a contractor in Massachusetts or Michigan had twenty white bricklayers and twenty white carpenters employed, and were to employ five colored bricklayers and five colored carpenters at the same wages paid to the white men, would not the white men refuse to work with such a contractor? Now, I wish to tell you, not what I read about, or heard somebody else tell about, but what occurred on my own premises. All our buildings were burnt about two years ago. We employed a white contractor to rebuild them. White men and colored men, carpenters, bricklayers, painters and common laborers worked together in the greatest harmony, at the same wages for the same kind of work. This could hardly have occurred in New England. Colored men got higher wages than white men doing the same work, if the colored men were better workmen. This could hardly have occurred in Michigan or Wisconsin. And what may seem stranger still to you Northern people, with your strong race prejudices, colored men and white men, with wages graded by skill, not by race, worked in perfect harmony together under our contractor's negro foreman or "boss carpenter; a thing which could hardly have occurred in any Northern State.*

But this duality, indistinct as it is in some lines of activity in the South, is in other lines as distinct as the land is from the sea. The "hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther," is as distinct in the minds of the two races as the color is in their faces. And it is very expensive educationally. The decision is not between two schools and one school for a community; it is between two schools and no school at all. There is no middle ground. And not only so, but the white people, who are so impoverished as not to be able to sustain respectable public schools for their own children, have taxed themselves of their own accord to sustain schools for the blacks.

The white people of North Carolina, as I have already said, pay ninety-nine hundredths of the taxes, and three-sevenths of the money raised goes to sustain the public schools for the blacks; and, besides this, we have, of our own accord, established separate normal schools to teach their teachers; we have, of our own accord, established a separate deaf and dumb institution for their mutes; and we have, of our own accord, built a costly asylum for their insane; in order to do this we have taxed ourselves up to the highest constitutional limit, and as heavily as Massachusetts taxes herself; and in consideration of our local option taxes for graded schools, and in further consideration of the fact that the blacks, composing nearly half our population, pay next to no taxes, the white people of North Carolina are to-day taxing their

*For particulars address T. C. Oakley, Builder and Contractor, Durham, N. C. Rev. Dr. Mattoon, Charlotte, N. C., told me that the same thing occurred during the erection of the new building at Biddle University.

dollar twice as hard as the white people of Massachusetts are taxing their dollar for public schools, and yet we can keep our public schools open only three months in the year, and can pay the teachers only \$25 per month and they board themselves.

In these peculiar straits we cry for help. The white people could educate their own people with their own means; but we cannot educate our own children even, when three-sevenths of the money raised in North Carolina, and a much larger proportion in other Southern States, must go to educate the blacks, whom the United States Government armed with the ballot, without making any provision for giving them intelligence to use it. Is this just to us? Is it just to the blacks? Is it just to the country at large? As a matter of fact, we of the South are paying the heaviest war tax in proportion to our means which a people ever paid, to educate the children of another race, for whose presence among us we are not responsible, who were thrust into our citizenship without our consent, and for whose education we are doing so much, of our own volition, that when our own children cry to us for bread we have to give them a stone.

The United States Government, and the United States Government alone, is equal to the emergency. There is a surplus in the Treasury, and the constitutionality of appropriating such a surplus has already been settled, if precedent can settle it. X The Government has in effect endowed agricultural and mechanical colleges in almost every State in the Union with money's worth in public lands. Now, if the Government can give and the States receive money's worth for higher education, it seems idle to object on constitutional grounds to the Government's giving money for the education of the masses, and especially for the education of the blacks, who will be benefited more than the whites by national aid. And we of the South feel that in previous benefactions by the Government we have not had our share.

According to the American Almanac for 1879 the Northern States have received more than 70,000,000 acres of public lands, which, at \$1.25 per acre, the Government price, amounts to \$88,000,000, while the South has received only six and a half millions of acres, amounting in round numbers to \$8,000,000, a difference of \$80,000,000 in favor of the North, who have suffered no calamity, who have had no mass of illiterates added to their citizenship, whose prosperity has been uninterrupted, and where illiteracy prevails only among an inappreciable proportion of the population.

Some who favor the distribution of the surplus among the States say that the distribution ought to be made according to population and not upon the basis of illiteracy. Does not this objection seem futile to any reasonable man? In time of danger the army goes to the threatened point; the navy goes to the threatened point. When an epidemic prevails, the aid goes to the threatened point. Illiteracy is the point of extreme danger,

X In 1837 a cash surplus was divided among the States by Congress and this national aid to common schooling gave N.C. her million & a half of antebellum school funds

and should not the aid be sent to the place where it is needed on the same principle which regulates the movements of the army or the navy, or of aid when epidemic or flood comes?

Some say that the States cannot be trusted with the distribution of the money. But the States *have* been trusted with the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, and why not with a cash surplus? Every Southern State has a system of public instruction in successful operation, and no misappropriation of funds has occurred in any part of the South since the carpet-baggers were driven out. Some say that the colored people will not get their share; but they get their share now of all public moneys raised by taxation, though the whites pay ninety-nine hundredths of the taxes; and if we give them their *per capita* share of money, wrung from the impoverished white people by taxation carried by our own volition to the utmost limit allowed by the Constitution, we may surely be trusted to give them their share of money given by the Government, more for their benefit than for ours, and more their due than ours, under all the circumstances.

Some say that the South has contributed but little to the National Treasury, and so has but little right to call for national aid. But in 1881, according to the report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, North Carolina paid in direct taxes \$2,479,362, and Massachusetts \$2,699,680, only \$200,000 more, with 300,000 more people and with ten times the taxable property. And North Carolina pays nearly twice as much as all New England, excluding Massachusetts, the figures being for North Carolina, in round numbers, \$2,400,000, and for all New England, excluding Massachusetts, \$1,400,000. And while North Carolina pays nearly as much internal revenue yearly as Massachusetts, and \$1,000,000 more than all New England, excluding Massachusetts, with only one-tenth of the taxable property *per capita*, the difference is still more marked between North Carolina and Kansas. With a population a little greater than Kansas, North Carolina probably consumes as many goods which pay a tariff as Kansas, while North Carolina pays ten times as much internal revenue as Kansas, the figures being for North Carolina \$2,400,000, and for Kansas \$240,000 yearly, in round numbers, and we pay at the same time a very heavy voluntary tax for the gratuitous education of the wards of the nation, and are so strained to do it that our own children are neglected and are growing up in illiteracy around us.

But there are some limitations which we think ought to be made. The aid ought to be limited to communities who do something for themselves. Any system of relief which pauperizes those relieved is a curse in the guise of a blessing; a veritable wolf in sheep's clothing, a devil as an angel of light. Require each community to put down a dollar of their own and "cover" it with a dollar, or two dollars, or more if need be, from

the national aid fund ; but do nothing till the community which you intend to aid has done all it can for itself.

There is another limitation which it seems to me ought to be insisted upon. Do not allow any of the national aid to be put into buildings. We do not want one dollar of it put into bricks ; we want it all put into brains. I believe that the greatest mistake which has been made educationally, North and South, has been in endowing bricks instead of endowing brains. There are literally hundreds of communities in the South who determined to drive out the devil of ignorance ; and so they made a grand effort, got a long subscription list and put a large sum of money into a showy school building, without providing a dollar to pay teachers ; and for awhile they enjoyed the vain delusion that a school-house is a school. But the devil of ignorance, (like the unclean spirit in the parable, that went out of the man) after walking through dry places seeking rest, findeth none, and he saith, I will return to my house whence I came out, and he findeth it "empty," it is true, but neither "swept nor garnished"; and so he goeth and taketh to himself seven other devils worse than himself—the devil of discontent, the devil of disappointment, the devil of misappropriated funds, and so on through the seven ; and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that community is worse than the first. In order to emphasize this objection to endowing bricks instead of brains, I call your attention to the fact that at the first great reformation, the formation of Christianity in fact, our Lord and his immediate followers, the reforming and reformed element, left all the buildings and other church property in the hands of the unreformed element and preached from house to house, in highway, field and wilderness. In the second great reformation, Luther and his followers imitated the example of our Lord and his followers, and the church buildings and property were left a second time by the reformed in the hands of the unreformed. The same thing occurred again in the Wesleyan movement. The same thing occurred again in the free church movement in Scotland in 1837. I tell you if you endow teacherships—if you put a good teacher to work—a house will crystallize around him, good enough for all practical purposes, and as a practical proof of this I call your attention to the encouraging fact that in 1882 the public school property in North Carolina, backward as we are in many things, was worth twice as much as it was in 1881, according to the report of the superintendent of public instruction ; and by the end of 1884 it is safe to say that it will be worth twice as much as it was in 1882. A snail builds his own house. An oyster secretes his shell from his own substance, and if a school cannot do as well as a snail or an oyster, we had better give up the business of public education.

Another limitation should be, it seems to me, that not a dollar should be paid in salaries to officials. We do not want any more revenue officers. The States have administered the proceeds of

the land scrip amounting to nearly \$100,000,000 for higher education, and the States can surely administer a smaller sum for the education of the masses. The educational machinery of every State, and of every county of every State, is in running order, but is running at half speed in the South for want of motive power; put in the motive power in the shape of teachers' salaries, so as to increase the duration of the schools from three to six months, and the teachers' salaries from \$25 to \$50 per month, and the results would be marvellous.

Another limitation should be, in time. The aid, if given, ought to be temporary, so that our people may be stimulated to their utmost while the aid lasts, and thus they will not be emasculated by depending upon external aid for internal needs.

The need is the result of entirely anomalous conditions—the terrible prostration of the white people and their consequent inability to educate their own children, and the presence of six million illiterate blacks armed with the ballot which they cannot read. These conditions make a crisis of momentous import, and neither whites nor blacks have, as yet, any accumulated resources, but must draw upon the future, year by year, by mortgaging the growing crop in order to get supplies to make it with. But the worst is past. Our people are aroused. The new education is abroad among us. The teachers of our common schools are visiting the Northeast and the Northwest in search of the best methods of instruction. Experts from the Northeast and Northwest have come in large numbers to preside over our normal schools and teachers' institutes in various parts of the South, and many of our native teachers are doing work of this kind in a way which would do them credit in any part of the Union.

The graded school movement, to which I have referred incidentally, has given a wonderful impulse to public education. These schools are established in almost every town of any considerable size, the proceeds of the regular school tax being supplemented by a local option tax, which supplies money enough to keep the schools in operation for nine months. The germ of this, the most important educational movement among us, is the Tileston Normal School, established in Wilmington, N. C., by Miss Bradley, almost immediately after the war, and sustained by the munificence of Mrs. Hemenway, of Boston. I doubt whether the same amount of money ever produced as great results, educationally, before. The success of Miss Bradley and her female colleagues convinced our people of two things which they had not realized before; 1st, that a public school could be made worthy of the patronage of our best people; and 2d, that female teachers could do it. And now there are many of these "graded schools," presided over by a male superintendent as a rule, but taught almost exclusively by female teachers, and doing as good work, in the opinion of such a man as Dr. Mayo, of the New England Journal of Education, as any schools in the United

States. Under all these circumstances, "the set time to favor Zion" has come.

With national aid for ten years we can manage illiteracy, both of blacks and whites, ourselves; but, if we continue the unequal struggle for these most germinant ten years without the support which we are in a condition to use with the greatest effect now, our people will be discouraged, and there is danger that a darkness that will, sooner or later, make itself felt will envelop a people who only need temporary aid to put them where they can and will provide for themselves.

And the poverty of our people will, in one respect at least, give momentum to this great educational movement; for nowhere in the civilized world can the same class of teachers be commanded for as little money. In other countries the most cultured people, those who lead public sentiment, those who stand highest socially, cannot be induced, in any considerable numbers, to undertake the laborious business of teaching. But in the South hundreds of cultured men, and thousands of cultured women, are reduced to such pecuniary straits that they are ready to do any respectable work which will yield them even the scanty pay which taxation and national aid combined will give to a public school teacher. This is especially the case with our women. There are very few avenues of employment open to them, and the pay they can earn is very small; but they are looking, as never before, for some honorable means of becoming self-supporting. I have been calling the attention of our people for several years to the fact that so many teachers at the North and so few teachers at the South are women. Two years ago seven-eighths of all the teachers in public schools in Massachusetts were women, while only one-seventh in North Carolina, as a whole, were women, though in "graded schools," taken alone, fully six-sevenths of the teachers are women, which accounts for their excellent work for children, and their comparatively small cost; and the Tileston Academy at Wilmington, already referred to, was, I think, the first school of the kind in a Southern State. We wish to organize and utilize the God-given skill and earnestness of our women in the management of our school children in the COUNTRY SCHOOLS also (where twenty-two twenty-thirds of the children must be trained, if trained at all,) as has been done already in the towns; and teaching children is a business in which the fingers of most men are all thumbs, the thumbs all elbows, and the elbows are cut off at the shoulder joint. If we had teacherships paying \$500 a year, the best and most cultured women in the South could be commanded to do the work of public instruction in the country schools, as they are already doing it in the graded schools in the towns, and this is the only hope for the twenty-two twenty-thirds of our population; for only one twenty-third live in towns. Furthermore, no educational movement can be successful till the work is done by native teachers; and, as I have already said, a

better class of native teachers can be commanded to-day in the South and for less money, than any where else in the civilized World. But in order to prepare this large body of prospective teachers to be most efficient, NORMAL TRAINING by experts must be provided for. Some of these prospective teachers, especially among our young women, are already well equipped as far as a knowledge of subjects is concerned. Brains, intelligence and enthusiasm can be commanded, and these will make vastly better teachers without any special normal training than all the normal training of all the normal schools, without brains, intelligence, and enthusiasm. But a large proportion of these who must do the teaching, if it is done at all, lack the necessary knowledge, both of subjects and of methods, and they have no money to pay for such knowledge. If schools of repute among us, where *subjects* are already successfully taught, could teach *methods* in normal "annexes," presided over by one trained specialist to each such school, (just as military tactics are taught in schools of repute North and South by specialists detailed for the purpose from the U. S. Army and paid by the Government to do this quasi military annex work,) if some such arrangement as this could be made, so as to utilize and supplement the educational work among us in which our people have confidence, and to direct it towards training teachers, the greatest good could probably be done soonest, most cheaply and most permanently. But schools of repute in the South are almost all straightened financially, and such of them as are willing to do any gratuitous work are already so overburdened with the *regular* instruction of non-paying *pupils* that they cannot establish efficient normal classes for the *special* instruction of non-paying *teachers*. The States can do no more than they are doing in the way of summer institutes, lasting only four or five weeks; and unless continuous normal training is provided for in some way at points numerous enough to be reached at small cost and without tuition fees, national aid will lose fully one half of its value, and probably two thirds of its value, for lack of teachers to administer it who know methods as well as subjects.

Such colored men and women as Gen'l Armstrong, at Hampton, Va., Dr. Tupper of Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C., and other kindred spirits have prepared for this work, should be enabled to train their own race; and, if the pay were sufficient, by degrees our best white people, who in many localities, have labored for years in the religious training of the colored people in Sunday schools, &c., would become interested in their public school work, and such schools, like mission schools in heathen lands, without disturbing the social relations of teachers and taught, would do much to secure harmony and to cultivate kindness between the races.

As a proof of the personal interest which our best people are now taking in the colored schools, I beg you to note the fact

already referred to, that in as many as three of our largest towns in North Carolina, the graded schools for both races are managed by the same white superintendent, and the additional facts, that our most prominent physicians are instructing a class of colored medical students in Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C., and that the son of a prominent clergyman and doctor of divinity of the Southern Presbyterian church, has been giving instruction to colored men in Biddle University, Charlotte, N. C., and that the Principal of one of our most successful private schools, who for seven years has been a teacher in the University Normal School, is to take charge of the Colored Normal School at New Berne in August.*

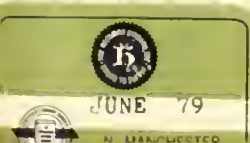
How grandly then under all these circumstances, can the general Government show the world, by this appropriation, the estimation in which education is held in the Great Republic! How grandly can the general Government endorse the labors of the thousands of hard worked and poorly paid teachers, that noble army of martyrs, who do so much for others and so little for themselves. How grandly can the general Government supplement the liberality of benevolent people in the North, who, from their private resources, have given more than \$10,000,000 since the surrender, for the education of illiterates in the South.

The War between the States is one of the grandest dramas of all the ages. Its results have been momentous. Whatever else it did, whatever it failed to do, it advanced the civilization of this country wonderfully. We are to-day a century ahead of what we would have been without it. The clash of arms ceased nineteen years ago; but the war will not be really ended till the leprosy of illiteracy is removed from the white people whom the war impoverished, and from the blacks whom it enfranchised and armed with the rights of citizenship. What a grand ending of the war forever, what a grand dropping of the curtain upon the grandest drama of the grandest century of all the ages, for the United States Government to make this grand appropriation for education. Let this great act be done. Let the sun of the nineteenth century set in this splendid radiance, making the evening of the century

"One of those ambrosial eves
A day of tempest sometimes leaves."

*For particulars, address Rev. Dr. Tupper, President of Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C.; Rev. Dr. Mattoon, President of Biddle University, Charlotte, N. C.; and Dr. Richard H. Lewis, Kinston, N. C.

H 214 79



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 019 886 541 2